MAPIT SKYWATCH

M A N C H E S T E R A E R I A L P H E N O M E N A

I N V E S T I G A T I O N T E A M

INVESTIGATIONS INTO UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

OVER NORTHERN ENGLAND - 1973

SPECIAL ISSUE NUMBER 2

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.....PUBLISHERS OF SKYWATCH.....

M A N C H E S T E R A E R I A L P H E N O M E N A I N V E S T I G A T I O N

T E A M

FOUNDED: 1973

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WHAT IS MAPIT?

This leaflet has been compiled to explain to interested persons the basic structure of MAPIT and its future role in British UFOlogy. We are a non-profit-making, non-religious, open-minded Group dedicated to the enigma of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO's). All research undertaken by MAPIT adopts a Scientific approach, and the bringing together socially of UFO-interested people is also a major priority.

PUBLICATIONS

MAPIT publish a Magazine entitled "SKYWATCH", which first appeared in September 1973. Since then it has grown from a one page Newsletter to an open forum magazine, which is distributed throughout the world. In Great Britain the magazine has a large readership and is acknowledged by many UFOlogists as one of the best Group publications. UFO Sightings, Articles, Readers' Letters, UFO News, Advertisements and more, make "SKYWATCH" a good read. Special issues are also published, the first having appeared in August 1974 which dealt with theories of UFO Origins.

REFERENCE LIBRARY

To make progress in UFO and related Research Projects, a comprehensive library of books is essential. Not only necessary for projects, but also invaluable in the preparation of Articles, Lectures, etc. Over the last two years MAPIT has been striving to present to its members a library to be proud of. To date the library consists of over 1,500 items, e.g. UFO, Ghost, Monster, ESP, Psychic, Astronomy books, Newsclippings, Lecture tapes, interviews and assorted back and current issue magazines. We at MAPIT know that this collection is only small compared to other Groups, but it covers a wide spectrum of subjects perhaps related in some way to finding an answer. The Library is open to anyone wishing to use it for research, etc., but we must emphasise that this is a Reference Library, and not a Lending one.

MEETINGS

Meetings are an important part of any Group, but sometimes due to the distance of members they are not always possible. But members meet at irregular intervals in their homes and at the Secretary's home address.

SUBSCRIPTION

Membership to the Manchester Aerial Phenomena Team is open to all people, irrespective of age, colour, race and religion. The present rates are as follows:-

Six issues - £1.20. Twelve issues - £2.40. Single issue - 20p.

Donations always welcome. Enclose S.A.E. with all correspondence for a reply. Membership payable by Postal Order only (uncrossed) and made payable to D.L.REES.

We hope to hear from you soon and perhaps you may decide to join us in this, one of Man's greatest unsolved mysteries. We at MAPIT do not pretend to say we will uncover the truth and solve the UFO's, but perhaps the phenomenon won't be ------ solved without us.

Hope to hear from you in the near future.

DAVID L. REES.

Secretary - M.A.P.I.T.
Editor - SKYWATCH.

This is the second special issue published by MAPIT, the first one being printed in 1974 dealing with UFO Origins. The following sightings are taken from a large amount of reports from 1973. There were many LITS cases, (lights in the sky sightings) which do not supply too much information for the researcher. Also misinterpretations and hoaxes. These have been excluded from this special issue, leaving us with the more interesting cases, one coming from the United States. If anyone requires further information on any of the items included, they are quite welcome to write to the Secretary's address, enclosing an SAE. I would like to thank the following people for their help in interviewing witnesses and investigating the sightings on behalf of MAPIT:

Mr.Stephens, Mr.D.Frost, Mr.Aspinall, Mrs.M.Wa[illegible], Miss J.Randles and Miss P. Drury.

D. L. REES.

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REPORT No.1

Date:- 23rd March, 1973 - a Saturday.
Time:- 08.25
Location:- Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire.
Witness:- Mr.R.Bogle, an Engineer aged 35. Interested in aircraft probable that we can discount this as an explanation.

INVESTIGATION:- This report is of a type of UFO which has become quite familiar in 1973. This is of a Green Ball, which was apparently glowing. It also seemed to have a tail. The witness saw the object for several seconds as it flashed across the sky at tremendous speed. When it approached the horizon it seemed to vanis as if switched off. There was no sound recorded. (Unusual with the great speed).

CONCLUSION:- This object is remarkably similar to a sighting in Altrincham on the 15th August, 1973. (Elsewhere in this issue). Although separated by many months. It might be noticed that it does have certain characteristics of a Meteor, but an object of such size (seen, remember, in daylight) would surely have been reported by many people, be on Astronomical records and quite probably have broken into pieces, some of which would have fallen to Earth. Perhaps any Astronomical person(s) could comment on this and possibly compile a dossier on past Meteors, many of which in reality fall more into the category of UFO's owing to their strange behaviour.

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REPORT No.2

Date:- 18th April, 1973 - a Wednesday.
Time:- 20.30
Location:- Haslington, Near Crewe, Cheshire. A small village three miles outside of Crewe. Mostly new housing estates with much open-ground and farm land.
Witness:- There were several witnesses to this case, all young boys about 11 or 12. It must be admitted that this case does not so highly in strangeness or credibility as many of the sightings investigated, but it is included since it displays some useful points. The witnesses were interviewed and seemed most trustworthy and not over-convinced that they had seen anything

strange; their teacher was also seen, and he said that he believed their story, but thought (as we do) that they had embelished it somewhat.

INVESTIGATION:- The boys describe a sharp bright red light which appeared at 20.30 and seemed to be an aircraft landing in the distance. A second similar light appeared above it and travelled in the opposite direction. When they crossed, the first light went out. They watched the second for three or four minutes before it disappeared behind a tree. They made remarkable estimates of its dimensions (size 25*; speed 100 mph; 25 miles) (although one claimed 19"; 108 mph; 25 miles). We doubt if such a small object could be seen at such a distance, however. There were other exaggerations: One boy claimed that the first light fired a LASER beam at the second and that this one then disintergated! I have little doubt that this was an embellishment, since none of the others will go as far as that.

CONCLUSION:- On looking at the area concerned one is struck by the fact that the direction indicated for the UFO's is exactly that of Ringway (25 miles away), but aircraft are very difficult to see going into that airport and in any case, we feel that these lights were much closer. Other aircraft are seen overhead not going to Ringway, and it is possible that these were such - but two so close together? Although there is nothing to rule out aircraft in this case it does show that when dealing with witnesses such as these (of whom perhaps you are not quite sure), such embellishments to a story and minor disagreements are natural; (Perhaps a psychology expert would confirm this)and lend more support to its basic validity than would four or five EXACTLY SIMILAR stories.

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REPORT No.3.

Date:- 7 June 1973.
Time:- 22.00 hrs.
Location:- Lamplugh, Cumberland (now Cumbria). Open country dotted with a few farms.
Witness:- A 20-year-old forestry worker, used to being outdoors and with a good academic background. He is very objective as one would expect from his background.

INVESTIGATION:- It was a fine evening with dusk falling around 22.00 hrs. The witness was walking home across the fields from Lamplugh Cross (approx. 1 mile). He heard a droning noise which seemed to penetrate and cause a pounding sensation. It did not sound like a helicopter or aircraft. It slowly caught up with the witness and a visual sighting was made at 22.10 hrs. with the object overhead. Dogs in a nearby field were disturbed and howled. The object was a large cylinder with rounded ends. It was metallic, reflecting the setting Sun and had no markings or exhaust. It moved slowly, estimated at 10 mph and just cleared a hill to the South (murton Fell - 1500 ft). A very accurate assessment can be made of the dimensions of the craft since the object was in view for so long (at least 15 minutes) and distances and heights are known. The size of 330 feet is consistent with the witness's description of "as big as a railway carriage", and fits well with the previously reported large size cylinders or cigars. (See report No.8).

CONCLUSION:- This is certainly one of the most interesting cases we have investigated to date. It is a pity that the scene and witness (plus others who heard the sound) are so far distant. Nevertheless, our investigator, Mr.Stephens has supplied a full report of the witness's statement, including maps and diagrams, which is very comprehensive. There seems little to exclude the possibility that this was a real uhknown object. An object in view for so long would surely be identifiable if it were something ordinary.

One can only think of a balloon or airship following the speed and flight pattern indicated but the noise and other descriptive factors do not agree. We suppose it is possible that some experimental airforce vehicle was being tested but it seems strange that they would allow themselves to be seen if they did not intend to, and if they did, why no mention of it?

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REPORT No.4.

Date:- July 2nd, 1973 - a Monday.
Time:- 20.45 hrs.
Location:- Lostock Gralam, Near Northwich, Cheshire.
Witness:- Mrs.E.M.Rees, a 52-year-old housewife.

INVESTIGATION:- The witness was out with her family for the day and had stopped the car at a lay-by. She was alone by the car, when she sighted a bright fluorescent light which was shaped like a long jewel. It seemed to descend as if controlled behind some trees and into a field. It was in view for five minutes and during this time all sounds around seemed blotted out, and although the witness wanted to shout out to the rest of her family, she could not. She says she felt it possessing her, and she was very alone. When her family returned the object had disappeared and no trace of it could be found in the fields. The weather was clear and hot, with the sun just setting. The object appeared in the west, well above the Sun. There was no orange tinge as one would expect from solar phenomena - the object was clear and white.

CONCLUSION:- There it no doubt that this sighting has left an impression on the witness. Prior to it she dismissed UFO's but now she is not able to do so. You may well think that with the proximity of the area to Ringway the landing light of an aircraft could be the cause, but this is ruled out because the airport is in the opposite direction. On checking the airport, no aircraft landed at the time of the incident. The duration of the report does not indicate any astronomical phenomena and in fact it does not seem to be stretching things to find a natural explanation on this object. Perhaps someone will disagree and be able to come up with a possibility - but meantime we must consider it unidentified.

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REPORT No.5

Date:- July 21st/23rd, 1973 - a Saturday and Monday.
Time:- 22.30 hrs.
Location:- Massena, United States of America.
Witness:- Miss P. Drury, a 19-year-old student.

INVESTIGATION:- The witness and her family were camping at Massena, USA, when they sighted 2 or 3 star-like objects moving in different directions about the sky. They seemed to jump about erractically and appear and disappear for short periods, only to reappear further along their line of movement. On the Monday, up to seven of these objects were seen to follow similarly erractic paths. The witness is familar with astronomical phenomena and is sure that they were not meteors or aircfaft. Her conclusion, although puzzled, was that they must have been satellites.

CONCLUSION:- The conclusion that these objects were satellites is a possibility, although for several reasons not a likely one. It is true that due to passing through the Earth's shadow, satellites can on occasions disappear, but this does not occur with regularity. Of course, the erratic movement could have been due to an optical effect. The witness does mention that the sky was very clear and the night was very warm and so some kind of shimmering of the atmosphere may have occurred, although the Milky Way was clearly visible and so seeing must have been pretty good. The only other possibility which springs to mind is that they could have been military aircraft, flying high on some kind of refuelling exercise. Perhaps a military base lies nearby. We would be grateful to hear from our American friends on this matter.

REPORT No.6

Date:- 15th August, 1973 - a Wednesday.
Time:- 22.25 hrs.
Location:- Altrincham, Near Hale, Cheshire.
Witness:- Mr.A.Jones, aged 16, an apprentice joiner. Although young, it seems most unlikely that the witness did not genuinely see the object described. He was extremely difficult to interview since his parents did not want the story bringing out. They did attest as to how the experience had affected him.

INVESTIGATION:- The witness was waiting for a bus after having taken his girl-friend home, when he noted a vivid green object over Lloyd Street. It has bright streaks across it and was visible for three or four seconds as it silently disappeared behind shops and flats. It was at the height of a three-storey building and approximately 100 yards from the witness. Its size was described as about 2½ feet. When the witness arrived at home he looked very strange and his eyes were "staring" - according to his parents. The story was reported in the Altrincham Guardian under the heading description "Lovesickness".

CONCLUSION:- Andrew thought that the object could have been a meteor - and as we have commented before, certain "meteors" have been reported similar to this, although Astronomers are not at all certain that this is what they are. The speed and fuzzy outline agrees with this, but the silence and reported height do not agree. A back-up sighting from Rhyl, North Wales, came to our notice via Mrs.Jones. Through correspondence from Rhyl we have found that 3 people saw a green ellipse with bright streaks travelling silently out to sea at about 22.30 hrs. on the same evening. Communcation with these witnesses has been difficult, but from their report the correspondence is exact and there is little doubt that it is the same (or similar) object - (trace the Altrincham-Rhyl path). Unusual meteor or not, it certainly is a mystery.

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REPORT no.7

Date:- August 18th, 1973 - a Saturday.
Time:- 20.00 hrs.
Location:- Reddish, Stockport, Cheshire.
Witness:- Mr.G.Dunscombe, 53 years old. Although the witness is an invalid, he is a very capable observer. He noted a very bright circular light above a house close by when closing the curtains, the time being 20.00 hrs. The light remained stationary for about two hours. At 23.00 hrs, it had disappeared. The light was described as similar to a Molotov basket dropped during the war or a car headlight. It was 6" in diameter AT ARMS LENGTH. There was no sound and no movement. There were no other witnesses.

INVESTIGATION:- Miss Drury interviewed the witness in great depth, tape-recording the conversation. Also Miss Randles spoke to him for an hour on the telephone. One immediate thought is that it was an astronomical phenomena, but he is quite sure that it did not move and also a bright star (which has BEEN identified as Jupiter) was seen exactly where it should have been. This was the brightest object visible, but the UFO was at least 20 times as bright as this. Even if we can explain the size though optical effects this would tend to rule out a star, etc. Likewise an aircraft does not seem to fit the facts. From measurements made, the size of the object is thought to be 40 feet - but an unanswered question is why nobody else in quite a populated area reported such an object on a Saturday night!

CONCLUSION:- No explanation has been found and it would seem that a UFO is very probable in this case. Both investigators do not consider a hoax/ hallucination at all likely.

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REPORT No.8

Date:- September 12th, 1973 - a Wednesday.
Time:- 5.50 a.m.
Location:- Moors near Oldham, Lancs.
Witness:- Mr.W.Davies.

During the early morning with the Sun just up, the witness sighted through a bus window a cone-shaped object over Potts and Pans Hill. It hovered for about ten seconds, then shot off at an incredible speed and vapourised. The object was described as Metallic Bronze (probably strongly reflecting the Sun which was BEHIND the observer).

INVESTIGATION:- The case was investigated by Mrs.Wanner and Mr.Frost and Mr.Aspinall. They interviewed the witness and visited the scene. The area would seem to be quite desolate and so further witnesses were not available. It is not know whether any markings were visible, but there was no sound. The dissolution of the object is reminiscent of an optical phenomena, but it could be due to the speed of departure.

CONCLUSION:- The investigators feel that this was a genuine UFO experience. It would be useful to get more facts to try to confirm or disprove the optical theory, however.

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REPORT No.9

Date: September 19th - a Wednesday.
Time:- 18.45 - 19.15.
Location:- Unsworth, Nr.Bury, Lancs.
Witness:- Mr.P.W.Styles, a 30-year old engineer. There are several witnesses to this very interesting report. Besides Mr.Styles, his wife, their next door neighbours and P.c.Daly (from Whitefield) who came after the Styles called the station to report the object. There were witnesses also in Bolton, who reported the case to the local paper and several other unknown persons who called Ringway and Jodrell Bank to report a sighting. Initial sighting was of a bright object in the evening sky moving slowly to the South-East. It was bright but had no definable shape. It was in view for thirty minutes and was viewed by all the witnesses mentioned. The object was reported to the Police, Barton Airport, Ringway and Jodrell Bank, but no Radar contact was recorded. At 19.15 the object seemed to split into three parts and drift away from each other. During the sighting, an usually large number of aircraft, many military, were seen to fly over the area and the witnesses felt that they should have been able to see the object. The height was estimated at 40 - 60,000 feet.

CONCLUSION:- The official reply to this report was that it could have been a weather balloon (certainly a possibility,given the conditions), but none have been traced in the area. This report was alsc investigated by BUFORA.

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REPORT No.10

Date:- November 10th - a Saturday.
Time:- 22.10 hrs.
Location:- Whalley Range, Near Manchester.
Witness:- Miss J.Randles and her mother.

Miss Randles' mother noticed a very bright light travelling through the sky behind some trees, through the French Windows. She called for her daughter, and after about 20-30 seconds she was out in the garden. She looked around, but could see nor hear nothing. About two minutes after the initial shout from Mrs.Randles, Jenny saw the bright, which light followed by two small orange lights travelling slowly and silently to the East

over towards Moss Side. It passed quite close overhead, still silent, and disappeared over the rooftops. They thought at the time that it was just an aircraft with unusual lights and strangely quite. After checking at the airport, the following was noted: There were no aircraft in the area at the time; the nearest should not have been visible from the house (a flight from Frankfurt at 21.30).

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REPORT No.11

Date:- 13th November - a Tuesday.
Time:- 22.30
Location:- Levenshulme, Near Manchester.
Witnesses:- Mrs.A.Longdon and Mr.C.Barrow.

The witnesses were walking in an easterly direction alongside a football field. They noticed a small white light which was travelling very slowly along the route normally taken by aircraft going into Ringway. Their attention was drawn to the fact that, as the angle of vision altered, there appeared to be no change in the general appearance of the object. At this point, they both stopped walking, watching the object for about a minute; no noise was heard and none of the usual aircraft lights were seen. At the point where aircraft usually swing to the west, the object continued in a south-easterly direction when turned slightly to the west and accelerated very rapidly deep into the distance. As it disappeared, they noticed the object gave off one red flash; the duration of this observation was one minute.

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REPORT No.12

Date:- 8th December - a Saturday.
Time:- 19.20
Location:- Manchester Central.
Witness:- Mr.D.L.Rees.

The witness was alone on Piccadilly Station when he noted a bright white light, elevation 70 feet, moving silently in a straight line. It was visible for approximately 15 seconds dropping through an arc of 40 feet and suddenly disappeared. Obviously, little conclusion can be said about this report. It could have been a satellite, but the diration seems too long for a Meteorite. If it was a UFO it was a pity it didn't give him a lift. After experiencing the wonder ful British Rail service that day, I'm sure it would have been appreciated.

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The following reprinted from SKYWATCH No.3 - November 1973:-

MYSTERY AIRCRAFT.....By John Parkinson.

In your last issue, David Rees raised some interesting points regarding the possibility of alien intelligences producing sound effects similar to ordinary aircraft. I think this should be considered seriously, This brings me to a sighting of an unusual object and what I took to be a light aircraft following in its wake on 28th October 1973 - 5.30 p.m. Standing in the back garden of my home (Crosby, Lancs), my eyes were drawn to this object which seemed to float along with no sound of an engine. Yellow porthole lights could be seen the full length of the craft. I had the impression that the object was shaped like a Silver Rocket, with no wings or tail, moving slowly. Having seen a similar object a few years ago at Southport, I was aware of my feelings. It was visible for a couple of minutes, but there seemed to be a time distortion. What I took to be a light aircraft appeared and seemed to be following the UFO, which had now disappeared behind some houses. On

reaching the position where I had lost sight of the UFO the aircraft circled the area and then flew back the way it had come. It had normal lights and engine noises. It flew over a playing field and cut its engine, gliding for a few minutes low down before starting up again. Was it out of petrol and looking for a landing place, or had it seen the UFO and followed it, only to lose it, so it decided to check the field in case it had come down there? There could be a number of reasons why a light aircraft should circle the area for fifteen minutes - but could we consider it more than a light aircraft, I wonder? From my observations of UFO's over Kirkby in 1964 and since I KNOW UFO's exist beyond a shadow of a doubt, that light aircraft could well have been used for short range reconnaisance without causing suspicion. Our so-called stars are UFO in certain cases (See UFO's over Kirkby). When dealing with an alien science we should remember that all things are possible and that we are hot concerned with MEN. At night one looks up at the stars in wonder. Out there is a universe; all around space lies waiting a challenge to man, who cannot understand or grasp the significance of it all. Yet hopefully we ponder; we may play a part in a long-range plan which brought about our beginning.

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1. MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS - Friday, March 23rd. Brilliant Object in Sky Sparks UFO Calls:- Scores of UFO spotters rang the police and Manchester Evening News today after seeing a brilliant green-coloured shape with a tail in the sky over the Manchester area. It was visible for only seconds before disappearing below the horizon. Sightings varied from Manchester and Stockport to the Oldham area. Mr.Robert Bogle, an engineer, of Tarnside Close, Offerton, Stockport was exercising his dog at breakfast when he saw the object. "It was a very bright, greenish ball of light with a long tail to it. It was visible for just a couple of seconds before vanishing", he said. Shop manager Mr.Richard Hamblet of Romiley, Stockport, saw it from his car. "It seemed to be about 200 yards away and finally seemed to drop over some open land". University technician Mr.Clifford Metcalffe thought it might have been over the Cheetham area in Manchester. Police said they had received no reports of damage from any "Meteorite" type object. A spokesman at Ringway Airport said they had not heard of any unusual object in the sky.

2. MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS - Monday, April 30th. UFO's stage a fly-past: Funeral Director Mr.Geoffrey Wellens saw six strange objects flying at above 5,000 feet over Middleton last night. They were spherical in shape and glinted like silver. Mr.Wellens' wife also saw them. So did a 14-year-old girl living next door. The three took turns to gaze at them through a pair of plastic binoculars. "They looked like twinkling stars catching the sun", Mr.Wellens, of Worcester Road, Middleton, said today. Mr.Wellens, a Special Constable, has described what he saw to Lancashire County Police. One theory that would explain the objects was suggested by a Senior Officer at Air Traffic Control, Preston. He said, "There was a big moorland fire at Belmont, Nr.Bolton, last night. This could have caused a lot of refraction. The spheres could have been particles of smoke and flame".

3. LIVERPOOL ECHO - Wednesday, August 22nd. Space Invasion This Weekend? Thousands of Flying Saucer experts are predicting that spacemen will land here within a week. They are busy setting up equipment to make a scientific study of the aliens when they arrive on a hillside near Warminster, in Wiltshire. "I know some people think we are off our heads, but we have every good reason to believe that a craft from another planet will make a landing", says Mr.Keith Palmer, Director of the"International Unidentified Flying Object Society". Mr.Palmer, a 30-year-old assistant Shipping Manager, with 3 children, says he has seen about 30 UFO's himself.

4. LIVERPOOL ECHO - Monday, October 22nd. The Spudniks in the Sky. Sir, For the past few months, my husband and I have noticed two strange bright objects in the sky most nights. They move about at times and when they do they move off in a sort of shooting/spinning motion. We wonder if any other reader has noticed them. Needless to say we have christened them Spudniks - Mrs.G.Norbury, Liverpool.

5. LIVERPOOL ECHO - Monday, October 29th. More Mystery Lights. Sir, I am writing to confirm the sightings of strange lights in the night sky, as was mentioned in yourreader's letter (Echo Oct.22nd). A few weeks ago I was in St.Helens when I saw what I thought was a bright planet. It was completely stationary. I pointed it out to two of my friends, who also agreed it was bright. We forgot it for a moment, ten I looked up and noticed it was moving. While we were looking at it, it appeared to blink out and vanish. Another of my friends has seen strange lights in the sky in a similar area. We are all aware of the shape of aircraft at night, being keen aircraft enthusiasts, but none of us can identify these lights. - Puzzled, Bootle.

6. WYTHENSHAWE EXPRESS - Friday, 28th December. Scores See Night Meteor. Police and coastguards in Cumberland and Westmorland last night received scores of reports of what was believed to be a meteorite passing over the area. It lit up the countryside with a green and white light as it raced through the sky from east to west. Coastguards at Workington said today that the Solway Firth was lit up for about 10 seconds before the object passed out to sea. A spokesman added: "It seemed to be travelling towards Ireland and it was seen later by people on the Irish coast and in Wales. Neither the Meteorological Office at Preston, or the Institute of Geological Sciences Observatory at Eskdalemuir, Dumfriesshire, could say certainly what the object was, but they thought it was probably a Meteorite. It was first sighted at about 9 p.m. last night".

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SKYWATCH is the publication of the Manchester Aerial Phenomena Investigation Team. All contributions are welcome and exchanges with other groups' publications always considered.